

# **MPRB 101**

5E BAC Subcommittee Meeting  
1 November 2022

# For Thousands of Years...

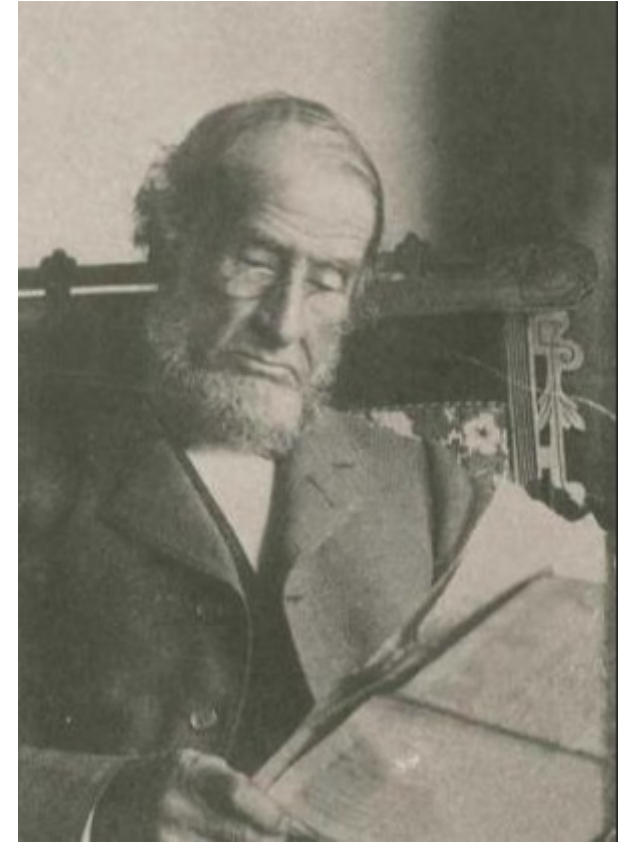
- Indigenous peoples have lived along the rivers and lakeshores of current-day Minneapolis.
- Bdote is a Dakota word which translates to “where two waters come together.” It is a word of many meanings, including the Minneapolis-St. Paul region, but also the spiritual birthplace of the Dakota at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers.
- Many Indigenous people were forcibly removed and relocated to other states or killed as conflicts arose with European settlement, especially after the US-Dakota War of 1862.
- Check out: [www.bdotememorymap.org](http://www.bdotememorymap.org)



Seth Eastman Watercolor of Bdote, 1848 – [www.bdotememorymap.org](http://www.bdotememorymap.org)

# Minneapolis and Parks are Born

- Westward expansion of the U.S. moves to Minnesota for fur and lumber and eventually flour as prairies are turned to wheat.
- Minneapolis is a town in 1856, and City in 1867.
- In the late 1800's Horace Cleveland, Charles Loring, and William Folwell dream of a grand system of parks in Minneapolis, and St. Paul too.
- Minneapolis is growing; Cleveland wants to purchase lands along waterbodies before price is too high. Coming from New England, he knew firsthand of the cost of parks after a city's growth.
- Cleveland (landscape architect, poor) and Loring (civic leader, rich), push for establishment of a park commission.
- Cleveland wants public lands and parks for beauty and health.
- Loring wants parks for economic benefit (taxes).
- Success in a second attempt in 1883 with the state legislature and a referendum of Minneapolis voters (58%).
- The Minneapolis Board of Park Commissioners is born.

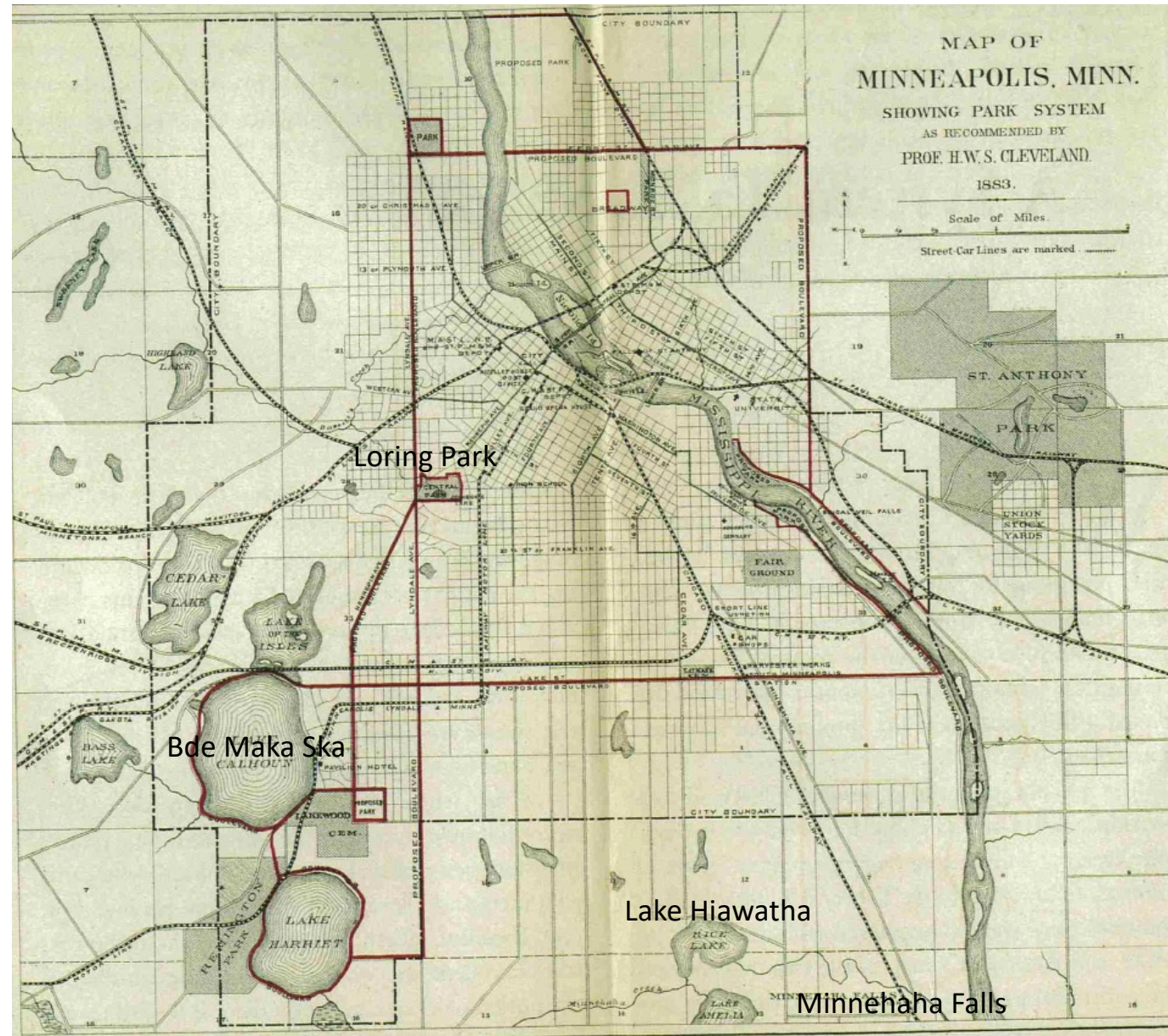


Horace Cleveland, Landscape Architect



# The Big Idea

- Cleveland's ideas for purchasing and developing parks along the city's waterways sparked decades of regional park development and expansion.
- Put's the most valuable real estate in the hands of the people.
- Mansions sit across parkways from lakes and rivers.
- The development of the regional park system isn't without flaws.



Horace Cleveland 1883 Park System Plan

# 136 Years of Park Development

- Murphy Square is oldest park (1857, near Augsburg University)
- 1884-1905 - major acquisitions of regional parks: Chain of Lakes, Minnehaha Falls, Theodore Wirth, Powderhorn, Minnehaha Parkway, Columbia, East River Bank, and The Parade.
- 1906-29 - Bde Maka Ska and Lake of the Isles are dredged, parkways and paths constructed, park buildings, golf courses and concession stands opened, and recreation programs provided.
- 1930s – Great Depression brings federal funds and an era of the WPA (stone walls, overlooks, bridges, etc.).
- 1945+ – Post-war period brings a demand for playgrounds, open space, athletic fields and year-round recreation programs.
- 1970s – almost all existing park buildings are demolished and new (current) recreation centers constructed.
- 2016 – 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan created, providing millions of dollars annually for maintenance, rehabilitation and capital improvements at neighborhood parks.
- 2017 – A criteria-based system for regional trail and trail capital scheduling is established, and also equity criteria for allocating recreation center funding is established.



Turtle Fountain, now at Rose Garden

Gateway Park, Hennepin Ave, Downtown



# ...Our Current Park System

- 6,817 acres of parkland and water.
- 161 neighborhood parks.
- 19 regional parks and trails.
- 49 recreation centers.
- 29 computer labs.
- 200+ sport courts.
- 118 playgrounds.
- 65 aquatic facilities.
- 102 miles of Grand Rounds trails.
- 600 full time and 1,500 seasonal staff.
- 600,000 trees in parks and boulevards.



Webber Natural Swimming Pool

# Fast Facts

- MPRB is an independent government agency.
- Nine elected commissioners.
- Spans across 7 cities and Fort Snelling.
- 146 park properties, not rights-of-way.
- Regional parks receive state funding, like state parks.



Owamni Falling Waters Festival



# From the City Charter

## Charter Powers:

1. The Board establishes, governs, administers, and maintains, and may design, develop, and improve—
  - a. the **parks, parkways, and recreational opportunities** in and adjacent to the City;
  - b. each **lake, waterway**, or other body of water in the park system;
  - c. the ornamental and shade **trees** in the City's streets, alleys, and public grounds and ways;
  - d. any **gallery, museum, or school** in the park system.

## Other Powers:

2. The Board also **enjoys all the powers for which any general law, special law, or ordinance provides**, including any power necessary and proper for exercising its enumerated powers or for performing its lawful functions.

## General Powers:

3. When exercising its powers under this charter, the Board may act on the City's behalf and enjoys all powers necessary and proper for the exercise of its function under this charter, including (but not limited to)—
  - a. **eminent domain**;
  - b. **power over public ways** that pass through, over, or adjacent to property that it owns or governs, including the **power to open, improve, or vacate a public way**;
  - c. **power over the shores and waterways** adjacent to any lake, waterway, or other body of water that it owns or governs, including exclusive power over any lake, waterway, or other body of water whose shore it entirely owns.

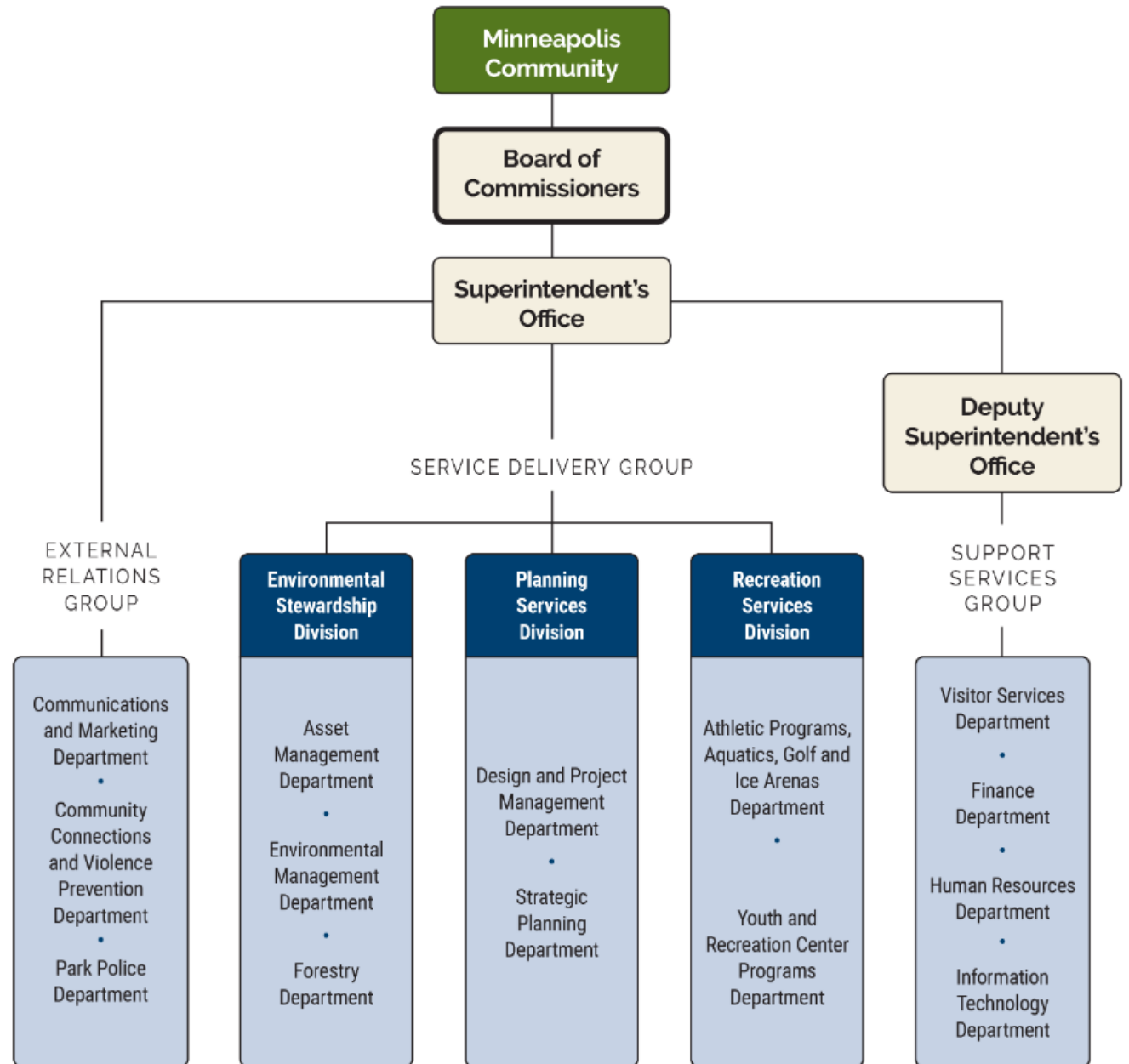


Matthews Park – “Movies in the Parks”



# MPRB Org Chart

- MPRB run for and by the People. They elect nine commissioners.
- Six Commissioners from district areas (like wards), three at-large.
- Commissioners hire a Superintendent of Parks (Al Bangoura).
- Superintendent oversees:
  - Deputy and three Assistant Superintendents
  - Communications Department
  - New Community Connections and Violence Prevention Department
  - Park Police



# The Budget

\$96M General Fund (2022)

\$14M Enterprise Fund (2022)

- General Fund is funded by property taxes, fees and fines, and local government aid, and it pays for wages (72%), capital improvements (3%), and operations (25%).
- Enterprise Fund is for profit making things, like golf, parking, food vendors, etc. and pays for wages, improvements, operations, and debt service within an enterprise activity.

Example: Golf makes money from rounds played, then funds its operations and improvements from that revenue. Tax dollars are not spent on golf courses.



# Parks for All



## Parks for All Comprehensive Plan 2021 - 2036



# Parks for All – Mission and Vision

## Mission

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board permanently **preserves, protects, maintains, improves, and enhances its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations** of our region including people, plants, and wildlife.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board **dismantles historic inequities** in the provision of park and recreation opportunities **for all people** to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that **promote health, wellbeing, community, and the environment.**

## Vision

In 2036, the **Minneapolis park and recreation system embodies equitable park and recreation access balanced with ecological health.** It is a premier destination that welcomes and brings joy to people that live, play, work, study in and visit Minneapolis. Natural, cultural, artistic, historical, athletic, and recreational resources cultivate outstanding experiences that break down barriers to health, enjoyment, fun and learning for all people. The park system meets the needs of individuals, families and communities across culture, class, race/ethnicity, language, ability, geography, generation and gender. A robust and vibrant tree canopy and system of natural areas extends its health, economic, and environmental benefits to every home. The focus on preserving land continues, with a strong emphasis on connecting people to the land and each other. Through storytelling and experience, MPRB fosters pride in park users and staff and cultivates a new generation of proud stewards and supporters of an extraordinary park and recreation system.



# Parks for All - Values

**Equitable:** An equitable park system is one that provides just and fair inclusion for all people across age, race, culture, economic status, ability, and gender, and acknowledges that racial equity needs to be the priority in our work to dismantle systemic racism in our city.

An equitable park system honors the unique qualities and needs of each user and neighborhood in design, programming, access to nature, registration, customer service and management. An equitable park and recreation system acknowledges past harms and works to ameliorate them, is adaptable, and is shaped by community and staffed by people who reflect the community. It also strives for a sense of welcome and joy in parks for all.

**Sustainable:** A sustainable park and recreation system is one that cares for its resources, both natural and financial, across generations. A sustainable system aligns with budget staff and facility capacity. It is also based on sustainable, climate resilient, or carbon neutral guidelines.

Environmental sustainability and an ecological focus on the preservation of parklands, natural areas, waters and the urban forest as well as management, design, operations and programming of parks through practices that mitigate and adapt to climate change. Economic sustainability is focused on the short-term and long-term financial stability of the park system.

**Connected:** A connected park and recreation system operates with contextual awareness of the larger social, economic, political, and natural systems. The board and staff engage community and other agencies and organizations in decision making. Connection also includes physical connection of ecological systems and equitable access to parks through proximity for all Minneapolis residents.

**Independent:** Independence allows the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to focus on obtaining, retaining, and providing the resources necessary to accomplish its mission.

MPRB ensures parks for all and fosters and retains partnerships to meet the broad needs of the community.

**Accountable:** An accountable park and recreation system and board is one that stewards community visions toward implementation. It sustains long-term relationships with the land and public for the betterment of the park system and all living beings. An accountable agency creates avenues for employees and the public to engage in decision making.

**Innovative:** An innovative park and recreation system continually seeks ways to better deliver park and recreation services. Innovation supports responsiveness to changes in community, globally and locally. An innovative system and its leadership look to national and international inspiration, strives for excellence in all that it does, and relies on technology and data to inform decision making at all levels. A flexible approach allows for innovation to happen, and balanced with the other values is an important core trait.

# Parks for All - Goals

**Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity**

**Goal 2: Steward a continuum of nature and recreation**

**Goal 3: Provide core services with care**

**Goal 4: Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships**

**Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity**

**Goal 6: Strengthen ecological connections**

**Goal 7: Connect through communications and technology**

**Goal 8: Cultivate a thriving workforce**

**Goal 9: Operate a financially sustainable enterprise**



# Parks for All - Example Strategies

## Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity

### STRATEGIES

01

Recognize parks as a unique **venue** to support the creative sector, emerging and established artists and cultural practitioners, and to celebrate the diversity of our city as anchoring institutions.

02

Connect the stories of park **history** with the stories of today's park users, projects and staff, and promote them widely.

03

Amplify **Indigenous stories**, histories, cultural practices and connections to land through employment, partnerships, reconciliation planning, programming, ceremony, foraging, land management, interpretation and proactive community engagement across projects and programs.

04

Provide a wide variety of **programs** in the parks and activities at events to promote social, multi-generational and cross-cultural interaction and that create shared community experiences to bring diverse residents together in joyful, artful, and playful purpose.

05

Identify and remove **barriers** to park access as a way of fostering economic, psychological, social and cultural resilience for new and current park users.

06

Develop **marketing strategies** that center outreach to diverse racial and ethnic communities.

07

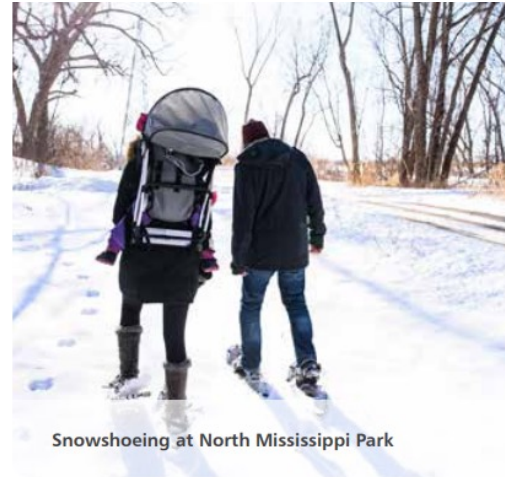
Continually **convene conversations** between those with different priorities for the parks.

08

Prioritize **youth and seniors** in programming and park projects through ongoing research, proactive engagement, and embedding innovation in our culture and practices.

09

Continue to evolve and practice **creative community engagement processes** to be more inclusive and representative of diverse populations and recognize community members for their wisdom, insight and feedback.



10

Create and market **programs** specifically for transgender and gender non-binary park users.

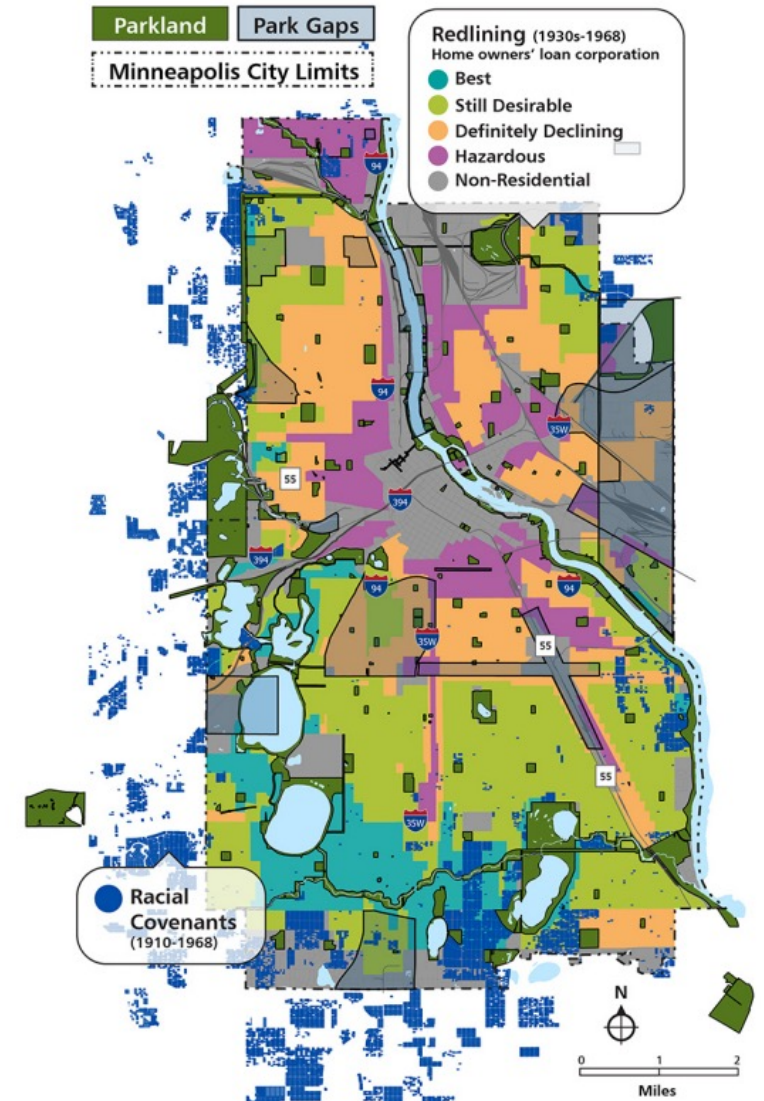
11

Cultivate **long-term relationships** with community members, leaders, artists, and community and cultural organizations to inform design, community engagement, and programming of parks.

12

Leverage the park system's **public presence** and community connections as an avenue to uplift and effect social change.

...plus 12 more.

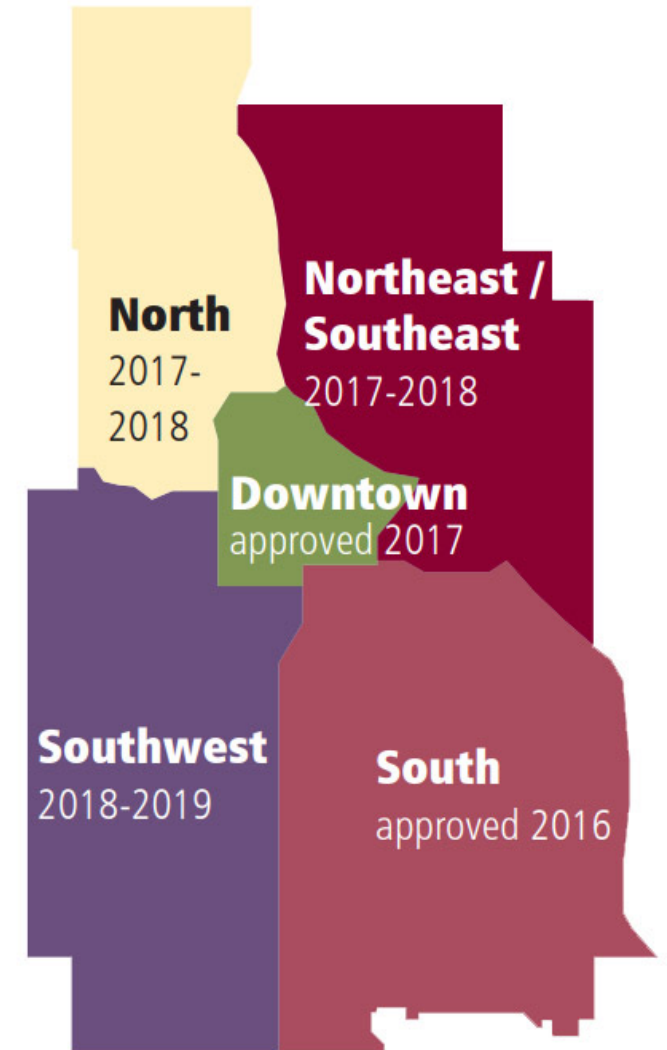


# Neighborhood Park Planning

Service areas have a master plan for its neighborhood parks.

MPRB had (and is still) worked with local communities in each service area to:

- Create a vision for the service area as a whole.
- Inventory what is in each park (outside of recreation centers).
- Determine and prioritize needs for change or improvement in each park.
- Guide funding and prioritize major projects for each park.
- And best guide use of NPP20 funding, additional \$11M for neighborhood parks each year until 2036.
  - Seven criteria for spending wisely:
    1. Racially concentrated areas of poverty
    2. Population density
    3. Youth population
    4. Neighborhood safety
    5. Condition of park assets
    6. Age of park assets
    7. Historic investment





# Regional Park Planning

- Each regional park has a master plan.
- Guides development for 20+ years.
- Plans adopted by Met Council, enables funding.
- Regional parks act like state parks in Twin Cities, receive state dollars via Met Council.
- Regional parks are usually for passive recreation like trails, beaches, picnicking, birding, gardens, and in some cases play areas and athletic fields.
- Planning process includes a Community Advisory Committee and several months to over a year of community engagement.
- Master planning usually takes more than 1.5 years to complete.





# Once Planned, Time to Implement

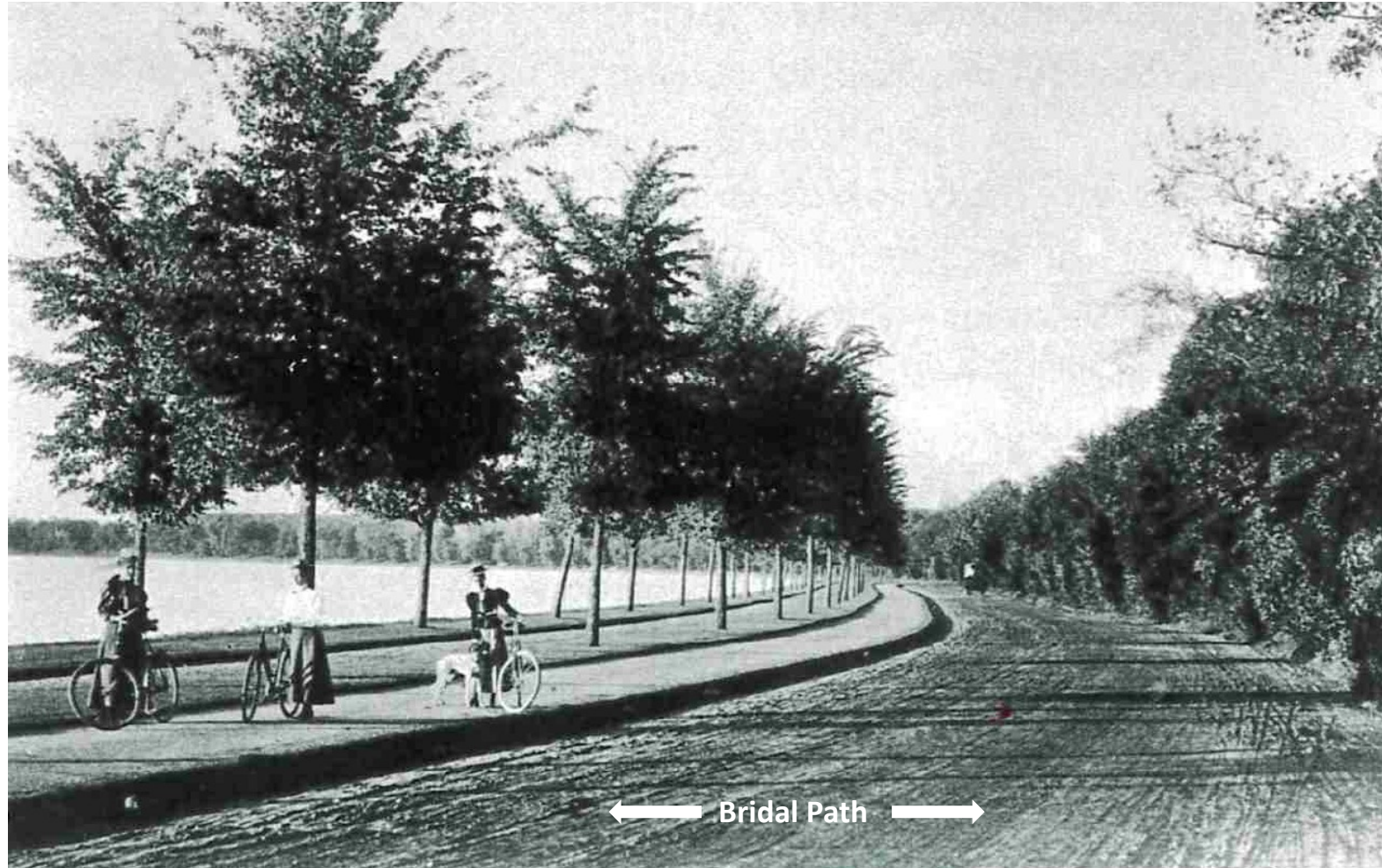
- When a plan is adopted, it can be funded.
- MPRB has a yearly budget that includes a six-year CIP (Capital Improvement Program).
- Decisions are made by metrics.

2021 Rank	Park Name	2021 TOTAL SCORE	1. 2021 ACP50 SCORE	2. 2021 DENSITY SCORE	3. 2021 YOUTH SCORE	4. 2021 SAFETY SCORE	5. 2021 CONDITION SCORE	6. 2021 LONGEVITY SCORE	7. 2021 INVESTMENT SCORE
1	28th St Totlot	19.50	5	3	1	2	4.50	1.0	3
2	Lyndale School Pool	19.00	5	1	0	2	5.00	3.0	3
3	Willard Park	18.07	5	2	2	2	2.90	1.2	3
4	Cedar Field Park	17.50	5	3	2	2	3.50	0.0	2
5	Powderhorn Park	17.19	5	3	2	2	2.73	1.5	1
6	Stewart Field Park	17.11	5	3	2	2	3.11	1.0	1
7	Sumner Field Park	17.00	5	2	2	2	3.00	1.0	2
8	North Commons Park	16.94	5	2	2	2	3.31	0.6	2
9	Hall Park	16.59	5	2	2	2	2.69	0.9	2
10	Jordan Park	16.50	5	3	2	2	3.83	0.7	0
11	Folwell Park	16.13	5	3	2	2	2.46	0.7	1
12	Bohannon Field Park	16.01	5	1	2	2	2.58	1.4	2
13	Murphy Square Park	16.00	5	3	2	2	1.00	0.0	3
14	Painter Park	15.75	5	3	0	2	3.42	1.3	1
15	East Phillips Park	15.64	5	3	2	2	2.54	1.1	0
16	Whittier Park	15.62	3	3	1	2	3.20	1.4	2
17	Clinton Field Park	15.57	3	3	1	2	3.17	1.4	2
18	Bethune Park	15.31	5	2	2	2	2.60	1.7	0
19	Harrison Park	15.19	5	1	2	2	3.33	0.9	1
20	Phillips Pool & Gym	15.00	5	3	2	2	3.00	0.0	0
21	Humboldt Triangle	15.00	5	2	2	2	1.00	0.0	3
22	Riverside Park *	14.80	0	3	2	2	2.80	2.0	3
23	Farview Park	14.66	5	1	2	2	2.21	0.4	2

Lake Harriet,  
1890s

Walking Path →

Cycling Path →



← Bridal Path →

# Thanks, and Some Quick Links

Webpage: [www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org)

Parks: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/parks-destinations/parks-lakes/](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/parks-destinations/parks-lakes/)

Calendar: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/event-calendar/](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/event-calendar/)

About: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/about-us/](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/about-us/)

History: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/about-us/history/](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/about-us/history/)

Budget: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/about-us/budget-financial/](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/about-us/budget-financial/)

Current Projects: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/current\\_projects/](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/current_projects/)

Master Plans: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/master\\_plans/](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/master_plans/)

Recreation: [www.minneapolisparcs.org/activities-events](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/activities-events)